

Target Talk

TEXAS HUNTER EDUCATION NEWS



Quarterly Newsletter

Winter Issue 2017

No. 160

Mission: To manage and conserve the natural and cultural resources of Texas and to provide hunting, fishing and outdoor recreation opportunities for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

Coordinator's Column



Hope the 2017 Hunting Seasons are going well for you – be it as a Hunter, Hunter Education Instructor, Hunt Mentor or Hunt Master! Have a SAFE, FUN, RESPONSIBLE and memorable season no matter what role you are playing. I wish you all a very **Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!**

ACCOMPLISHMENTS for 2017

- *New* Online Registration System
- 54,826 Students and 242 New Instructors
- 20,026 Students taught in Classroom/Schools
- 1,109 TYHP Hunters and 72 New Hunt Masters
- 2,280 students/281 instructors – TX Ag. Ext.
- New "Hunting for Conservation" CLFT Training
- National Staff Award at IHEA-USA Conference
- Mentor/Challenge Hunts & Outreach Events

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

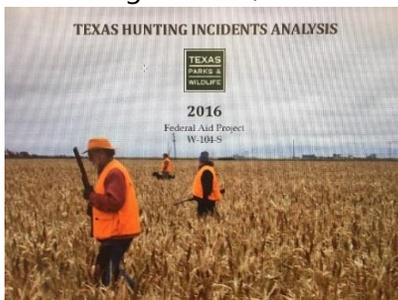


SAVE THESE 2018 DATES!

- **February 16-18 –Trapper Education**
San Angelo - brock.minton@tpwd.texas.gov
- **March 23-24 – Tree Stand Certification**
Athens monica.bickerstaff@tpwd.texas.gov
- **April 20-22nd - HE INST.CONFERENCE**
Wimberley, Young Judea; texastheia.org
- **June 25-28th - IHEA Annual Conference**
Anchorage, AK - ihea-usa.org
- **Sept 8 - Wildlife Management Workshop**
Kerr WMA- brock.minton@tpwd.texas.gov
- **Nov. 2-4th - BOW 25thANNIVERSARY**
Brownwood - heidi.rao@tpwd.texas.gov

FY 2017 NUMBERS

- **54,826 Students**
 - 20,026 - Classroom
 - 755 - Field Courses
 - 34,213 - Online-Only
 - 8,073 - Field/Skills Activities
 - 3,484 - Live-fire Exercises
- **3,121 Courses**
 - 1,290 - Classroom
 - 108 - Field
 - 36 - Bow Hunter Education
- **242 New Instructors Certified**
 - 356 - Instructors Trained
- **2, 863 Active Instructors**
 - 1,100 - Volunteers
 - 1,011 - Professional Educators
 - 632 - TPWD Game Wardens
 - 120 - TPWD Employees
- **Texas AgriLife Extension Partnership**
 - 281 - New Instructors Trained
 - 214 - Advanced Instructors
 - 2,280 - Participants thru 4-H
- **Texas Wildlife Assn. Partnership**
 - 1,109 - Youth Hunters
 - 200 - Youth Hunts
 - 166 - Landowners/Ranches
 - 1,783 - Total Huntmasters
- **Texas Hunting Incidents**
 - 24 Hunting Incidents (CY2016)
 - 5 Fatal; 19 Non-fatal
 - 10 HE graduates; 3 Online-only



N TX Hunter Ed Specialist Honored in 2017



NRA's **Peter Churchbourne** (L), Director, Hunter Services Division, and **Matt Fleming**, Hunter Services Manager, presented **Monica Bickerstaff - N TX Hunter Education Specialist**, with the prestigious **IHEA-USA Professional of the Year Award** at the 2017 annual *IHEA-USA Conference & Business Meeting* in Gleneden, OR, on May 23rd. Citing Monica's previous accomplishments as a Hunter Education Assistant Coordinator in Kansas and her current position with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Bickerstaff also assists IHEA-USA with registration (last five conferences), teaches for the national *Conservation Leaders for Tomorrow* program, runs mentor/women's hunts and assists in coordinating Texas *Becoming an Outdoors-Woman* workshops. Bickerstaff joins **Heidi Rao - S TX Hunter Education Specialist**, as recipients of this prestigious IHEA-USA Award.

NRA National Youth Hunter Education Challenge July 21st – 28th at Raton, NM



Texas YHEC Team Participates at Nationals!
(L to R): Chad Lovell (Coach), **Bob Boswell**, Aiden Lovell, **Duke Walton** (kneeling), Brayden Parker, Alura Lovell, Nathan Collins, Seth Chapman, **David Hammonds** and Sandy & Darl Chapman (YHEC Coaches). Special **THANKS** to **Texas Hunter Education Instructor's Association (THEIA)** for sponsoring the student travel!



S TX Hunter Education Specialist, Brock Minton, who coordinated Orienteering activities, and **Steve Hall, Hunter Education Coordinator**, who coordinated the Wildlife Identification Trail, joined NRA staff, Bob Davis, Monty Embrey and Emily Meade, and their many Volunteers at their **32nd Annual NRA Youth Hunter Education Challenge (YHEC)** in Raton, NM at the NRA Whittington Center. **TX Volunteer Instructors** included **David Hammonds - Fort Worth (TX YHEC HOST); Bob Boswell - Georgetown; Duke Walton - Porter; Lee Morris - Dumas; Billy & Judy Whitfield – Georgetown; Jeff & Dawn (Whitfield) Krehbiel – Liberty Hill.**

Texas Hosts IHEA Heritage Hunts!

For the last four years, Texas has hosted the **IHEA-USA Heritage Hunt** (formerly the “Dream Hunt”) at the Hixon Land & Cattle Ranch near Cotulla, Texas. (See 2017 Heritage Hunt Article within this national *IHEA-USA Journal!*)



2016 Heritage Hunt Participants



Anthony Oro, MA



Liam Schulte, MO



Rusty Weed, CarecoTV, videotapes Hixon Ranch guide, Landon Gulick, Bigfoot, TX, as he makes sure Hunt drawing winner, Anthony Oro, MA, has properly sighted in his rifle prior to his “Dream Hunt”. Previous videos have been featured on Wade Middleton’s *Americana Outdoors* and at *Hunter’s Handbook* (<http://huntershandbook.com>).



4 Generations of Hunter Education

During the summers near Kerrville, Texas, Paul and Patty Zohlen have “Camp Grandma.” For the 2016 Camp, they wanted a Hunter Education course. Paul, one of Texas Hunter Education Instructor Larry Arnold’s former students, invited Larry to teach it for the rest of the family in July. There were four teens, a mother, a grandmother, and a great-grandmother, for a **four (4) generation Hunter Education Course**. (From L to R: Mother, Maureen Zohlen, Zachary Johnson, Cole Aymond, Hunter Education Instructor **Larry Arnold - Kerrville**, great grandmother, Mary Evelyn Harrison, Dominic Zohlen, grandmother Patty Zohlen and Brandon Zohlen.

Inks Lake & San Angelo State Parks host Challenge Hunts with HE Help



Inks Lake State Park December 2016



Monica Bickerstaff, N TX HE Specialist and Area Chief, Brent Heath, Waco, along with other Central/N TX Instructors assisted with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Youth & Women Hunts at Lakes Waco and Whitney. Lucky hunters (L to R) were Caleb May, Josiah Moberg, Isaiah Palmer (harvested this nice 8-point) and Jeremy Moberg.

Fall Hunter Education/Youth Hunts www.tyhp.org



Vincent Lecca, Area Chief, Driftwood submitted this photo of he and TYHP Hunt Master, Ron Roberts, who host several Youth Hunts.



Vincent also submitted a lot of Hunter Education Course photos from the Buda YMCA and other locations. Keep up the great work, Vincent!

PITTMAN/ROBERTSON Video Available



Video Highlights Success of WSFR! - The Wildlife & Sport Fish Restoration (WSFR) Program is in its 80th Year - generating much needed CONSERVATION funding, stewardship and support from anglers and hunters in this country. A new video has been released that describes the program in detail, especially the accomplishments of hunters and target shooters. Feel free to use the video in your classrooms --to demonstrate why the "Users pay -- EVERYONE benefits!" system is the best conservation success story in the world. Go to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i150RP4v5i4>

"Few are the folks who actually enjoy paying more in taxes, but you can count hunters among those who do. The Wildlife Restoration Act of 1937 was supported by organized sportsmen and -women, state fish and game agencies, and industry to tax firearms and ammunition with the proceeds going specifically to wildlife conservation."



Randy Spradlin, W TX Hunter Education Specialist enjoyed meeting and speaking with "**President Teddy Roosevelt**" and **Teddy Roosevelt IV** (actual) at the 2016 IHEA-USA Conference held near Burlington, VT.

WELCOME NEW STAFF MEMBERS!



Johnnie Smith, Austin HQ Outreach & Education Director

Hired in October, Johnnie is responsible for overseeing Hunter Education, Target Range Grants and the myriad of other TPWD Education & Outreach Programs including Boater & Angler Education, Outreach, K-12 wildlife and habitats science curriculum -- Project WILD, the Texas Children in Nature Network, and TPWD's Community Water Education efforts, including the popular Texas Aquatic Science curriculum for grades 6-12.

An avid bow hunter, he also enjoys hiking, birdwatching, and kayaking. His background includes a 21-year USAF career, an elementary and middle school science educator, Education Programs Manager at the Texas State Aquarium in Corpus Christi, public school campus leadership as Assistant Principal and Principal, and Past President of the Informal Science Education Association of Texas. He succeeds Nancy Herron, whom many of you met during the 2011-2016 era for which she directed the division and programs.



**NEW* Hunter & Boater Education
Administrative Assistants**

Please welcome **Eddie Kleppinger** and **Monica Silva, Austin ACP, Hunter & Boater Education Administrative Assistants!**

Kleppinger began his new duties in December, filling the long – awaited position vacated by Kathy Powell back in October 2016. He knows he “has big shoes to fill” and will provide overall support including the online registration system, queries, training program, supplies and incentives for instructors and students throughout the state. He joins hunter education after serving many years in our State Parks division. “I look forward to meeting and speaking with the instructors and serving their needs -- efficiently,” said Kleppinger, excited to be a part of the team.

Many of you already know Silva who began her employment back in the spring and has served instructors since that time, especially in processing new instructor applications and answering queries related to the new Online Registration System. She will perform backup duties and assist with Hunter Education, especially during peak seasons/times.

***NEW* Central TX Hunter Education & Shooting Sports Specialist**

Many of you also know **Morgan Harbison, College Station**, the Mobile Shooting Range Coordinator, who took Charlie Wilson’s place back in 2015. Morgan has led the band wagon with *Ag Clays, Whiz Bang* and other Shotgun Shooting Sports efforts. In FY18, we reorganized and Morgan is now part of the Hunter Education Team, and alongside the Hunter Education Coordinator in Austin, will spearhead hunter education program efforts in Central Texas. He will retain his statewide shooting sports duties, but some of his previous duties will be assumed by the other regional specialists and/or through contracts – in hopes to expand our efforts for target shooters in Texas even more. Harbison started shooting shotgun competitively at age 11 and continued through college. During high school, he began shooting Bunker (International) Trap, which is what is shot in the Olympics. He was hired in 2015 by TPWD stating, “I enjoy being able to give back to an activity and to kids that grew up like I did – loving to hunt, fish and shoot!”



CALL/EMAIL YOUR REGIONAL STAFF!



PHOTO - **Hunter Education Staff** (From L to R): **Brock Minton, Steve Hall, Monica Bickerstaff, Randy Spradlin** and **Heidi Rao**;

- **N TX, Monica Bickerstaff, D/FW**
monica.bickerstaff@tpwd.texas.gov;
972-263-1219 w; 469-601-8349 c
- **S TX, Brock Minton, Corpus Christi**
brock.minton@tpwd.texas.gov; 361-
825-3249 w; 361-944-3617 c
- **SE TX, Heidi Rao, Houston**
heidi.rao@tpwd.texas.gov; 281-534-
0126 w; 713-829-1377 c
- **W TX, Randy Spradlin, Abilene**
randy.spradlin@tpwd.texas.gov; 512-
923-3509 w/c
- **C TX, Morgan Harbison, College Station**, (See photo - previous page.)
morgan.harbison@tpwd.texas.gov; or
- **C TX, Steve Hall, Hunter Ed Coordinator, Austin HQ**
steve.hall@tpwd.texas.gov; 512-389-
8140; 512-550-7330 c

2017 Hunting Incidents (5 fatalities) Reminds Hunters to Boat Safely!

Wear your life jacket.



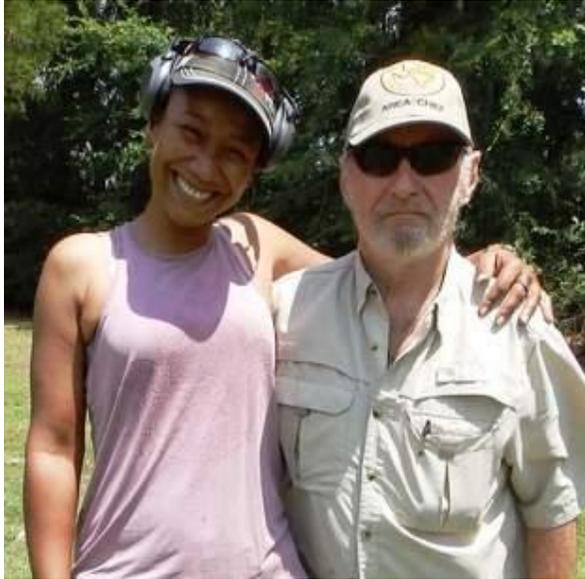
Changing Face of Hunters & Target Shooters

American Hunting Traditions are changing with shifting demographics and urbanization. Besides adapting to the new generations and using more ONLINE technologies by which to engage, market to, teach, register students and maintain databases, our customer base is changing.

It is both GOOD NEWS and BAD NEWS! The GOOD is the promotion of diversity, convenience, family opportunities and programs developed specifically for newcomers to hunting and the outdoors, and the growth in certain demographics such as women and activities such as target shooting. The BAD is loss of habitat, places to hunt and shoot, and overall decline in hunting license sales/participation rates.

A recent report entitled ***Young and Female — The Changing Face of Hunting in America*** (<https://www.outdoorhub.com/news/2017/08/21/young-female-changing-face-hunting-america/>) highlights the market growth of young, females getting involved in hunting and other activities dominated by men in our American outdoor culture. They credit the surge to accessibility and other factors such as the explosion of brand marketing, clothing industries and social media.

Needless to say, as our audience changes -- we must continue to adapt ourselves, as hunter education instructors. Do we look like our audience? If not, how can we diversify our instructor team? Do we market to our audience? If not, how can I get more involved in Social Media and other avenues by which to target our customer base? Are our courses inviting to a diverse customer base? Do we offer courses for Spanish customers, physically challenged and women?



AREA CHIEF Duke Walton, Porter "From Awareness, Interest and Trial to Continuation!"

*"I received a phone call from a woman asking for a hunter education class. She had never hunted or even held a firearm. After talking with her for a while I suggested the online class, and before I could finish, she said that she wanted a more hands-on, one-on-one class. I convinced her to do the online class as a precursor to a one-day field day and she asked what kind of firearm she should buy before our class. I told her not to buy anything until after our day at the range. It took her several weeks before she contacted me again. I had talked with **Dennis Rock**, another instructor, about taking her to his ranch to shoot, and he was most willing! She was a natural, learned very quickly and shot very well. I cut out two of her best groups, dated and signed them for her to keep and show her family. I was very surprised when she told me that she was going to buy an AR as she really liked mine. I told her to check out several calibers and call me back before buying one. I cleaned the .22 and showed her how and why to clean her firearms then she cleaned the rest of the guns. Then she said that she wanted to go hunting right away as her neighbor would take her hog hunting. I told her to buy her hunting licenses and how to apply for hunt drawings. I also invited her to join the Texas State Rifle Association and Becoming An Outdoor Woman."*



Changing Face Continued...

TX Hunter Education *Hall of Fame* Instructors and Area Chiefs, **Jose Garcia, Irving (L)**, and **Charles Preslar, Jr., Garland**, volunteer each year for the **Dallas Safari Club S.A.F.E.T.Y. Event** held at the Greystone Castle Sporting Club near Thurber. They took time to pose with "Miss DFW", Natalie, who brought a group to the event. Garcia and Preslar, along with many other hunter education instructors, have volunteered throughout the years -- an event that reaches between 200-300 youth semiannually. Thanks for your efforts!



Becoming an Outdoors-Woman to Celebrate 25th Anniversary

Begun in the fall 1993 at the Texas 4-H Center near Brownwood, TPWD Staff and Volunteer Instructors will return to the Center to host the **2018 Fall Becoming an Outdoors-Woman (BOW) Workshop, November 2-4th**, 25 years later. If you are interested or know someone who is interested, be sure to let Heidi Rao know by emailing Heidi.Rao@tpwd.texas.gov!